



Request for Proposals for
Building Opportunities for Lasting Development (BOLD) FY23 Cycle
Request for Proposal Issuance Date: July 18, 2022
Proposal Submission Deadline: August 19, 2022

I) Introduction

The City of Birmingham's Department of Innovation and Economic Opportunity (IEO) is soliciting proposals to grant public funds to any firm, corporation, or other business entity, public or private, for the purpose of promoting the economic development for the City. IEO is requesting proposals for creative, evidence-based approaches to advancing economic resilience and mobility in Birmingham under the Building Opportunities for Lasting Development (BOLD) grant program. IEO is working to build an ecosystem that allows innovation and opportunity to thrive by providing resources to nurture talent, by establishing infrastructure that supports the growth of women-, minority-, and disadvantaged businesses, and by focusing on developing our small businesses. Now in its fifth year, BOLD seeks to develop partnerships with community organizations that share IEO's vision of making Birmingham the model of an inclusive and resilient economy.

Consideration of BOLD applicants is weighted upon a focus on one or more of the following objectives and on one or more of the geographic priority areas.

BOLD Objectives

- Small businesses: identify, organize and deliver resources for Birmingham small business owners to grow and sustain their businesses
- Minority-, women-, and disadvantaged business enterprises (MWDBEs): identify and address barriers for women-, minority-, and disadvantaged business enterprises within the City of Birmingham
- Workforce development: develop and implement a reskilling strategy for Birmingham workers to gain upward mobility and to close the gap between employer needs and the skills our institutions produce
- Overcoming barriers: improve access to education, training, or employment opportunities through innovations in transportation, childcare, and the elimination of other critical barriers like internet and computer access
- Birmingham's neighborhoods: advance economic resilience, mobility, and inclusive growth in Birmingham's neighborhoods
- Data-driven Innovation: use data-driven insights and innovative approaches to advance inclusive growth potential in Birmingham

Geographic Priority Areas

- East Lake
- Ensley

- Five Points West
- Fourth Avenue Business District / Civil Rights District
- North Birmingham
- Smithfield/Elyton
- Woodlawn

This grant is authorized under Mayor Woodfin's FY 2023-2024 budget, which allocates up to \$1,000,000 to IEO for the creation of this grant program. Upon receiving notice of an award, organizations will work with the City Attorney's office to finalize an agreement, including a budget with clearly defined performance metrics and data sharing agreements. Such finalized agreements may require City Council approval prior to execution.

Agreements related to inclusive economic or industrial development as a result of this RFP will be awarded as professional service contracts pursuant to Amendment No. 772 to the Constitution of Alabama (1901) (Section 94.01(a)(3) of the Recompiled Constitution of Alabama) which authorizes the City to lend its credit to or grant public funds and things of value in aid of or to any corporation or other business entity for the purpose of promoting the economic or industrial development of the City.

THE FOLLOWING SCOPES OF SERVICES FOR THE BOLD PROGRAM SHOULD BE TREATED AS A GUIDELINE IN PREPARING A PROPOSAL RESPONSE, AND MAY BE SUBJECT TO NEGOTIATIONS RESULTING IN A FINAL AGREEMENT. THE APPLICANT SHOULD PROVIDE A PROPOSAL WHICH MEETS THE APPLICABLE SCOPE REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH BELOW.

II) Eligibility & Criteria

A. Eligibility:

Funding will be awarded on a competitive basis through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Applications are encouraged from Alabama non-profit organizations (IRC Section 501(c)(3) entities preferred), post-secondary education institutions, and relevant for-profit enterprises, particularly those with a social impact focus. Partnerships are encouraged, and groups of organizations may apply as a consortium of partners with a unified application. The funding amount of most BOLD grants ranges from \$50,000 to \$150,000, though compelling proposals of other funding amounts will be considered. Grants will be awarded to organizations with missions that align with the City of Birmingham's and IEO's priorities.

The City of Birmingham, as a matter of public policy, encourages participation of minority, women, disadvantaged business enterprises (MWDBE) to the maximum extent possible. Therefore, the City is committed to awarding contracts to firms that identify as MWDBE, that are dedicated to diversity, and that provide high-quality services. The City strongly encourages firms that are certified as MWBEs by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) to submit responses to this RFP.

B. Criteria:

Funding will be awarded to applicants whose programs demonstrate:

- A mission-oriented focus on building and growing a more inclusive economy in Birmingham

- Alignment with one or more BOLD objectives with a track record of working on the proposed objective(s)
- A focus on one or more of the BOLD geographic priority areas with a proven track record of success in the communities the applicants propose to serve
- Intimate understanding of the city's economic landscape, including a data-defined problem and solution with measurable standards for success
- A compelling project plan to meet the proposal's objectives, including work plan, budget narrative, and leveraged resources to complement any grant funding that could be awarded
- Apparent fiscal sustainability and capacity to execute on the scope of objectives outlined in the project narrative and project work plan

III) BOLD Application & Program Timeline

The City reserves the right to modify this schedule at its discretion. Notification of changes in connection with this RFP will be posted and made available to all interested parties via the City's BOLD webpage at: www.birminghamal.com/bold.

Calendar of Applications Phases & Milestones

Event		Date
Phase 0	Issuance of RFP	July 18, 2022
	RFP Information Session	July 21, 2022
	Proposal Workshop #1	July 28, 2022
	Proposal Workshop #2	August 4, 2022
	Proposal Workshop #3	August 11, 2022
	Application Deadline	August 19, 2022
Phase 1	Review of Written Applications	August 22 - September 16, 2022
	Finalist Presentations	September 21-23, 2022
	Grantee Selections & Negotiations	September 26 – October 10, 2022
Phase 2	Review by Council Subcommittees	October 10 – 31, 2022
	Review by Full Council	October 31 – November 21, 2022
	Awardee Announcement	Mid-December 2022
Phase 3	Performance Period	January 9, 2023 – January 8, 2024

Selections will not be final until approved by City Council. Selected projects will be review by both the Economic Development Committee and Budget and Finance Committee of City Council for approval, followed by approval by the full City Council.

IV) Contents of Proposal

- Completed application consisting of a series of short response questions
- Budget narrative
- Supplemental application materials

A. Application Questions:

Each applicant must include a form consisting of a series of short response questions. This can be found in Appendix B.

B. Budget Narrative

Applicants must download and complete the Budget Narrative Template as part of their application. See Appendix A for template.

i. Leverage

Grant proposals should detail a cost matching plan, with matching funds secured at a rate of 20% of the entire project budget. For example, if an application budget requires \$250,000, the proposal may seek up to \$200,000 from the City and should clearly indicate how it will provide \$50,000 toward the project objectives.

Leveraged resources procured by the applicant can be counted towards a proposal's cost matching. IEO will accept technical platforms as a leveraged resource. For example, if an applicant's organization has access to a data system that is relevant and useful to the project objectives and it is a subscription valued at \$25,000/year, we will accept that. IEO will also accept the quantified value of volunteer hours to the project.

ii. Funding Restrictions

Funding for construction will not be provided. However, construction costs can count toward the overall leveraged costs total. Any equipment over \$5,000 will require prior approval from the IEO. All sub-contracts associated with the project must be submitted to the IEO in the quarter in which they are executed. Lead partners are responsible for auditing the performance of subcontractors and guaranteeing compliance with reporting criteria.

iii. Organizational Fiscal Sustainability

Applicants—or lead applicants for partnerships—will be asked to upload financial information to validate organizational capacity and fiscal sustainability. We only require financial information for the current fiscal year, but we encourage applicants to submit information for the past year and the future year if available. If the selection committee requires more information, you will be contacted.

This could include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Organizational budget (or the budget of the lead agency in the partnership)
- IRS Form 990s
- Profit and Loss Statement
- Recent audit reports (within the last two fiscal years)

C. Supplemental Application Materials

Additionally, applicants may feel the need to attach reasonably appropriate additional material relevant to the partnership or the application (i.e. audited financial statements, MOUs between partners, letters of recommendation, organizational charts or flow charts).

V) Reservation of Rights

The City reserves the right to award agreements resulting from this RFP, which will be given to the highest rated proposal or proposals, based on the evaluation criteria set forth in this RFP.

Nothing contained herein shall obligate the City to award an agreement on the basis of this RFP. Any agreement awarded is subject to compliance with all provisions of Federal, State, and Local Laws.

The City of Birmingham reserves the right to award all or any part of this funding, to accept or reject any or all proposals, and to waive any informalities or technical irregularities or omissions in the proposal. The City of Birmingham may award contracts in whole or in part, or cancel this RFP and solicit new proposals if, in the City's sole judgment, the best interests and needs of the City of Birmingham will be served.

All costs incurred by an Applicant to respond to this RFP will be wholly the responsibility of the Applicant. All copies and contents of the proposal, attachments, and explanations thereto submitted in response to this RFP, except copyrighted material, shall become the property of the City of Birmingham regardless of the Applicant selected. Response to this RFP does not constitute an agreement between the Applicant and the City of Birmingham.

The City of Birmingham is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and does not discriminate against vendors on the basis of age, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, national origin, disability, marital status, familial status, veteran status or any other basis protected under federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ordinances.

It is each Applicant's responsibility to carefully review all the requirements of this RFP, including the scope of work, specifications and terms and conditions. Further, it is the Applicant's responsibility to ask questions, request clarification, or otherwise advise the City if any language, specifications or requirements of this RFP appear to be ambiguous, contradictory, restrictive or if they limit Applicants that could meet the requirements of this RFP to a single source.

VI) Award Notices

It is unlikely that projects will receive the total amount requested. Applicants who are awarded, but not at the full amount requested, will be contacted to amend and revise their scope of services to develop project agreements as needed. This outreach will happen in approximately October 2022.

Subject to approval of the Birmingham City Council, when required by law, upon the execution of an agreement to include a defined scope of services, project work plan, budget, and performance metrics, all funding will be disbursed in two installments. Funding amount will vary by project scope and purpose. All awarded projects must have the capacity to execute an agreement, approved by the City Attorney's Office, on or by January 9, 2023. These agreements will primarily be derived from awarded scopes of services and mutually agreed upon outcome metrics.

VII) Administrative Policy Requirements

As an attachment to each project agreement, awardees will be asked to provide monthly performance reports to the IEO. Each project agreement will have clearly defined outcome metrics that are derived from Project Work Plans and Project Narratives. If grant recipients are unable to deliver satisfactory progress or fail to report outcomes throughout the performance period, this may result in the loss of BOLD funding and projects. The City of Birmingham also reserves the right to perform an audit of projects at some point throughout the performance period.

VIII) Performance Period

The performance period for grant recipients is between January 9, 2023 and January 8, 2024, and grant proposals should contain quarterly targets for the relevant progress metrics. Grant recipients will receive funds in two installments: 50 percent of funds at the beginning of the performance period and 50 percent upon delivery of **satisfactory progress toward goal(s) by June 15, 2023.**

In alignment with the City of Birmingham's core values of **C**ustomer Service, **E**fficiency, **E**ffectiveness, **T**ransparency, and **A**ccountability (CEETA), grant recipients will be required to present their progress to date at the following meeting of the [Economic Development Committee](#) of City Council: Tuesday, July 18, 2023 at 1:00pm CST. IEO will work with Economic Development Committee staff to coordinate the above grant recipient presentations (approx. 5 minutes each).

Appendix A: Project Budget Narrative Template

[Click here to access our Budget Narrative template.](#)

Appendix B: BOLD Application

[Click here to access the BOLD application.](#)